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ABSTRACT

This report documents the results of a comprehensive survey of State, Catholic, and independent primary schools in Queensland and South Australia conducted in 1986 to identify the extent to which after-school care, recreation, education programs, and playgroup activities operated in school venues. A total of 1,927 schools were surveyed by mail; approximately 60 percent responded. Formal, funded programs were reported in 63 schools. The data generated from these programs identify details relating to administration, governance, budget, curricula, and participants. Further information was provided by 48 schools regarding informal, voluntary activities which cater to children arriving early and departing late. Innovative projects which have been beneficial to children, parents, and teachers in both urban and rural schools are noted. A small number of schools reported the involvement of playgroups in the school buildings. In response to questions about lack of programs, the majority of schools said they had never considered such a program. In conclusion, emerging questions and some further recommendations for research are suggested. Concluding remarks make particular reference to personnel and staffing of extended day programs. Areas of concern, such as staff-child ratio, contractual arrangements, and personnel evaluation, are discussed with a focus on program improvement. (Author/RH)

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SYNOPSIS

This report documents the results of a comprehensive survey of State, Catholic and Independent Primary Schools in Queensland and South Australia conducted in 1986 to identify the extent to which after-school care, recreation, education programs and playgroup activities operated in school venues. One thousand, nine hundred and twenty-seven (1927) schools were surveyed by mail. One thousand, one hundred and fifty-eight (1158) schools, or 60.1%, responded.

Formal funded programs were reported in sixty-three schools, or 5.4% of all responding schools. The data generated from these programs identify details relating to administration, governance, budget, curricula and participants.

Further information was provided by forty-eight schools regarding informal, voluntary activities which cater for early arrival and late departure of children. Innovative projects which have been beneficial to children, parents and teachers in both urban and rural schools are noted.

A small number of schools reported the involvement of playgroups in the school buildings.

In response to questions about lack of programs, the majority of schools (63%) said they had never considered such a program. Further reasons were stated as follows: decided against (6.3%), considering (2.9%), organising (.3%), discontinued (3.6%), other (9.2%) and no (10.6%). Many schools felt that there was "no need" in their local community.

Several questions remain to be answered about the care of children in out-of-school time. Emerging questions and some further recommendations for research have been suggested. The conclusion of the report has made particular reference to personnel and staffing of extended day programs. Areas of concern, such as staff-child ratio, contractual arrangements and personnel evaluation, have been discussed with a focus on improving the quality of such programs.

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In this research project several terms are used interchangeably. In Australia the most widely used term for the kind of programs surveyed is "after-school program". This term does describe some aspects of what kind of service is being provided but excludes the other characteristic features, such as vacation programs, before school and playgroup activities.

A second commonly used term in the school-care-recreation program area is "school age child care". A large part of the American public has unified under the auspices of such a title and a referral service in Wellesley, Massachusetts has been established with the same name. This term, like the "after-school" term, is not fully adequate to describe the kind of services about which we were enquiring. In fact, many programs in Australia would not want to label themselves as "school age child care" because they simply do not view what they are doing as child care.

The broadest possible generic term to describe the program characteristics under investigation is "extended day" program. This term is used to incorporate before, after and vacation school programs and other related activities which might be taken up by the school at its own or another venue. In other words, the "extended day" concept stretches the time and space boundaries of the school beyond the academic timetable and calendar and the sanctioned classroom environment.

INTRODUCTION

School-age child care is not a new thing. Programs to supervise school-age children during the summer months date back to World War 2. Today, however, growing social and economic pressures have fostered the latest interest in developing school-age child care programs. Since the early 1970's, traditional family patterns have been changing. Education and care were formerly shared activities amongst well known and trusted friends or extended family groups. At the 14th National Conference of the Australian Preschool Association, Sebastian spoke about community based support services for families with young children. She remarked:

As the stable world of the small community has become absorbed into the ever-shifting suburbia, and as families are being dispersed around the country, and even the world, children are growing up in a different kind of environment. Gradually, we have replaced the old extended family grouping and the small communities of which they were once part, with nuclear families, ...while at the same time losing the old kinship and neighbourhood ties. (1976:139)

Much has been made recently of such phrases as "Education through Partnership" and "Community Involvement" in both schools and preschools and "Community Based Support Services" for children and families, but to what extent do our schools and community organisations diversify services to meet the challenges and opportunities that these phrases imply?

Clear definitions of the terms - partnership, involvement and support - are not evident in the literature, nor amongst professionals. Notwithstanding such ambiguity in definition, some schools have already attempted to extend their roles from academic, education providers into the sphere of family support systems. In field visits to supervise practice teaching situations and other related field experience activities, we became aware of numerous programs run by schools to cater for diverse needs in local communities in both South Australia and Queensland. Each program had distinctive attributes and approaches; each program had, in effect, grown up on its own and had defined its own terms of reference.

In our research, we wanted to identify the extent to which schools had begun to involve themselves in the "caring" field through provision of such programs as playgroups and after-school care. We were curious to discover the way such schools viewed the extended day program in terms of its potential benefits to both children and the school. And finally, we wanted to know how programs operated in relation to daily management concerns such as fees, offerings, record keeping, governance, communication and staffing.

Schools, it seems were a likely place to begin to ask questions about the broader needs of children and families. As an institution, the school has witnessed dramatic changes in society and in family patterns. The number of marriages ending in divorce has increased significantly in recent years with the result that many children now live with one working parent.

Working parents' schedules often do not coincide with school hours and the changing patterns of family life have, for many, eroded kinship and neighbourhood ties of the past. This is a large change to have occurred in the past two decades. But some things have not changed. School still begins at about the same time and ends about the same time. Children still need friends, supportive adults, a snack and space to unwind.

This very issue has created a problem for both parents and schools whose best interests are focused on the well-being of the child. As the issue confronts increasing numbers of families, schools and other community organisations have felt increasing pressure to help with a solution. In our research, we wanted to focus on the range of solutions schools had already devised in this area. As a means of assisting new providers, the wisdom of the already existing after-school and playgroup programs could become useful sources of information about day-to-day functioning and the deeper philosophical program decisions.

Our project, then, sought to:

1. identify the extent to which schools were offering playgroup and after-school care programs,

2. record the views of such schools, regarding the benefits (if any) of extended day programs to the children and the school,
3. ascertain the actual program operations with regard to hours of operation, staffing, governance, fees, curriculum, budget and related matters, and
4. report such information for public perusal.

PROCEDURE

Literature search

Once the project was conceptualised, a wide literature search ensued to identify the range of written information on provision of after school and playgroup activities by schools. Written information on such programs from the U.S. perspective was minimal and the Australian review revealed scanty literature. A complete bibliography appears in appendix A.

Perhaps the most useful information was found in a 1984 report, Extended Day Programs in Independent Schools, (Nall & Switzer: 1984). This study published by the National Association of Independent Schools in Boston provided a prototype for our research investigations. Nall & Switzer sought to answer many of the same questions we had originally set:

- . how have schools considered the extended day and playgroup needs?
- . what have schools learned?
- . what questions still remain about community - home - school relations in this sphere?

The Nall & Switzer study also provided a clear and reliable questionnaire. The format for data collection used by the project was a two phase questionnaire. Based on the wisdom generated from the review, revision and field testing of the Nall & Switzer instrument, we decided to adopt the same questionnaire and to modify terminology as needed to meet the Australian context. (The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix B and C).

Selecting the sample

All primary schools in Queensland and South Australia were selected for the survey. The researchers selected these states as the sample because of residence and employment factors.

Each school system was invited to take part in the project through a letter to the senior staff person responsible for primary schools. The Queensland Department of Education Research Branch conducts reviews of all research proposed and their approval is mandatory for commencing projects in state schools. All school systems in both states replied in the affirmative to the project.

Distribution of questionnaire

Posting took place in February, 1986. Queensland schools were surveyed first and South Australian schools received forms one week later. All told, 1927 schools were surveyed. Of that total 1304 were sent to Queensland schools and 623 to South Australian schools.

RESPONSE

An overall response of 1158 schools, or 60.1% was generated. 770 Queensland schools reported, or 59%, and 388 South Australian Schools, or 62.3%. The response to the questionnaire is considered favourable for a single mailing with no follow up reminders. Tables 1, 2 and 3 display the response, by category of school, from each State and as a combined whole.

TABLE 1Queensland: Distribution and Response

	<u>Sent</u>	<u>Returned</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses - State Schools	1045	629	48.2
Catholic	203	98	7.5
Independent	12	6	.4
Other	44	18	1.4
Closed	—	19	1.5
Total	<u>1304</u>	<u>770</u>	<u>59.0</u>

TABLE 2South Australia: Distribution and Response

<u>Response</u>	<u>Sent</u>	<u>Returned</u>	<u>%</u>
State School	439	309	49.6
Catholic	116	45	7.2
Independent	17	13	2.1
Other	51	18	2.9
Closed	—	3	.5
	<u>623</u>	<u>388</u>	<u>62.3</u>

TABLE 3

Combined Sample

	<u>Sent</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>%</u>
State Schools	1484	938	48.7
Catholic Schools	319	143	7.4
Independent	29	19	1.0
Other	95	36	1.9
Closed	—	22	1.1
	1927	1158	60.1
	—	—	—

The Nall and Switzer study had a comparable return rate of 61% (1984:4). It is worth noting that Nall and Switzer were surveying a discrete population of members of an independent school association. Our current study has spread its net much more broadly and the 60.1% overall response from such a widely diverse population was heartening and unexpected.

The largest proportion of reporting schools, roughly one third, came from the small school category of total population of less than 101. The smallest reporting category is 11.3% in the large school category of population greater than 500. See table 4.

TABLE 4

Size of School

	<u>Number</u>	<u>% (1)</u>
Under 101	385	33.2%
102 - 200	220	19.1%
201 - 350	240	20.7%
351 - 500	167	14.4%
Over 500	<u>131</u>	11.3%
	1143	
School Size not specified	<u>15</u>	<u>1.3%</u>
	1158	100.0%

- (1) These figures have been analysed in terms of the total responses received across both states. The figures indicate the distribution of responses according to school size. Caution should be taken in reading this table as the total distribution of school size in the sample is not known. This table merely indicates the numbers of schools falling in certain size categories and the percentages of the total responses.

WHAT SCHOOLS ARE DOING

FORMAL PROGRAMS

The schools reporting active extended-day programs answered a comprehensive questionnaire regarding the management, policy, organisation and program offered. A copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix C. Data provided by the schools has been analysed and synthesised to indicate the wide variations in practice currently operating in extended day programs.

Our information suggests that school size does not seem to be a significant factor in the availability of school programs for before and after school hours. Programs were reported across all size categories but the largest single category was schools with a population of 201-350 children, reporting 19 programs or 30.2%. (See Table 5)

TABLE 5

Formal Before and After School Programs Reported by School Size

	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total Programs</u>
Under 101	9	14.3%
102 - 200	14	22.2%
201 - 350	19	30.2%
351 - 500	8	12.7%
Over 500	<u>13</u>	<u>20.6%</u>
	<u>63</u>	100.0%
% of Total Response	5.4%	

Formal before and after school programs were reported by 63 schools, a mere 5.4% of the responding schools.

The age of the program reflects the mounting pressures of recent changes in parents' working patterns. Ten years ago only 6.6% of these programs were in existence but between six and ten years ago 45.4% of the programs became operational in schools. This would, in the Australian context, reflect the vast injection of funds into what might have then been considered "innovative" educational programs during the 1975 Whitlam Labor Government days along with the return of many women to the workforce.

From 1980 to 1986, however, 33.3% of all programs began operation with about 21.6% of these programs having started between 1982 and 1986.

Fifteen percent of all programs were in their first year of operation at the time of the questionnaire.

Getting Started

In many cases reported by the questionnaire respondents, extended day programs were developed by the school. However, most resulted from a joint interest by a parent-school committee with 39% being started this way.

Several programs were initiated by parents, and others (14%) were begun by various community groups including the S.A. Department for Community Welfare, church groups, City Councils, the Committee for After School Activities and by the Cairns and District Child Care Development Association.

It appears that the initiative for starting the out of school hours programs was taken by many organisations. To begin to plan a service one must be aware of the particularity of each community. Each local community has different programs and different activities according to their needs, aspirations, expectations and life patterns. No single solution seems appropriate to every community context. In the cases reported by this survey several different groups and organisations initiated the after-school care programs to meet specific local needs and all have designated the school as the venue of choice for the operation of the activities.

Governance and Contracts

The questionnaire responses indicate that about 41% of the existing programs are governed by the school council and/or committee. Many others (43%) indicated that the program was governed by various people or small groups of interested people ranging from the school principal and staff members to state government departments.

When governed by the administration, the program is usually directly supervised by the principal or supervision is delegated to a member of the program's staff. Only 10 programs have a separate board of directors. Many programs do not have their own by-laws (48%) but some (40%) have developed a set of rules to suit their purposes.

Insurance agreements, when the out of school hours program is conducted on school grounds, are part of the over-all school's policy particularly in South Australia. However 30% of the programs said they have a separate policy to cover their out of school hours program.

Other legal or written agreements are not the norm for extended day programs. A comment was that one particular program had been "built on Trust and Hope" - certainly commendable, but perhaps not very reliable. Only two programs reported the use of contracts or letters of agreement with staff members. A letter of agreement stating general expectations and responsibilities may be a practice that is worth encouraging - and is one that certainly should be more prevalent.

Any organisation that is given the use of school facilities in Queensland must be a responsible, properly constituted one, such as a Parents and Citizens organisation, or YMCA, or even an ad hoc committee formed by people from the local community which is prepared to take on the supervision of the out of school hours program.

Space

Typically, an extended day program occupies rent-free, shared space in the school. Only two programs record the payment of rent for premises to a school. Shared space appears to be one of the most frequent irritants to staff members. An interesting factor to note is that five of the respondents reported that although theirs is a school supported program, it is actually conducted in facilities outside school grounds. Yet another conducts a program of physical activity for children who arrive early at school on a bus. This session has no need for a building as it is conducted in the school yard and is supervised by a teacher who is on duty. Although 19 of the programs reported having their own room within the school building, respondents consistently reported the important need for this to be their own space as well as pointing out the advantages of having that space. The advantages include:

- . clearer identity for the program
- . greater convenience for the staff
- . the opportunity for the children to have places for materials, equipment, displays and even an opportunity to exchange left over materials with the school in lieu.

Enrolment and Clientele

Most extended day programs are small, about half have 50 students or less, and approximately a quarter have more than 50. However fourteen programs have enrolments of over 100 children. Most programs serve children aged 6 to 12 years. Less than 12% also have provision made for children younger than 5 years of age.

Only one of the programs catered for children whose ages were beyond those of the usual primary school range.

Although the data were not always clear, about a quarter of the children in the programs appeared to be from single-parent families and the rest from dual- earner families. Interestingly enough, many programs also reported serving children from two-parent single-income families.

Time

Most of the responding programs (62%) operate after school hours. Only nine programs offer before-school care and these hours range from 6:30 - 8:30 a.m. (two hours in an inner suburban school) to 7:45 - 8:30 a.m. It appears that several schools permit students to arrive before the school day begins, even as early as 7:30 a.m. even though no formal program is in effect. Several programs remain open when school is closed for all or part of the day, e.g. "Show Day" in Brisbane. Twenty-three responded that they are open during the regular school vacations.

A typical after-school program operates from 3:00 to 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. although the hours range from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Ten schools stated that their care program caters for the younger children of the school who finish their lesson time earlier than their siblings or the rest of the school children in the upper grades. This aspect of the extended day for the younger children is useful in country school settings where children are reliant on school buses to get home to outlying farm areas. As the school buses leave only after the main school day, such programs provide a safe and acceptable situation for the younger 5-6 year old children.

Most programs give parents the choice of hourly, part-time, or full-time participation. Although the flexibility is much valued by parents, it is noted that it can be aggravating for the staff as the 'drop-in' options make it difficult to maintain a constant student-staff ratio.

Indications are that some working parents are likely to encounter delays in picking up their children, which leaves staff members caring for lonely children outside program hours. Responses to this type of situation vary greatly. For example, some programs impose a penalty or merely complain to the parent. Others may invite a child to join in with the packing up routine and/or to share a cup of tea with program staff while awaiting the parent.

To endeavour to counteract the situation, where a child is left after hours, nine of the programs impose penalties for late pick-up ranging from \$20.00 per part of the hour to \$1.00 for the first 15 minutes and 50c per additional 5 minutes.

Staffing and Salaries

Most people would agree that the quality of any program depends on the quality of its staff. Although recruiting staff members for extended day programs in schools is not seen as a problem, the actual diversity of the people employed in these situations warrants more attention. Twenty four programs indicated that it has been difficult either to attract or to retain quality staff. While many excellent people sincerely like children and are dedicated workers, the fact of a "split shift" - i.e. the early and late hours - coupled with the broad age span of children with whom they are expected to work, creates testing working conditions.

The staffing patterns in extended day programs are wide ranging and reflect the variety of the funding sources, varying local needs and expectations of programs.

For example in two similar programs in the same city, titles and rates of pay varied to this degree:

Program 1

Supervisor	20 hrs	\$170.00/Wk	Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood) Child Care Certificate (TAFE)
Assistant	15 hrs	\$ 97.70/Wk	Nil Qualifications stated
Assistant	Casual	\$ 6.50/Hr	Nil Qualifications stated

Program 2

Instructor-in- Charge	> 45 hrs	\$500.00/Wk - \$626.25/Wk -	Extended Day Program Vacation Care Program Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood)
Instructor	various	\$ 14.50/Hr	Nil Qualifications
Supervisor	various	\$ 4.00/Hr	Nil Qualifications

In neither program were staff hired by the school nor were they considered part of the school establishment.

Another program was run by a recreation teacher/coordinator for 18 hrs/wk on teacher wages. This person held a Bachelor of Education and was employed by the school full time as a non-contact teacher.

Instructors' hours of duty vary between 2 and 4 hours and wages range from \$36-\$72 per week. These people are brought in to share a specific skill with children, and are not usually employed by the school.

The hours worked vary quite considerably. Coordinators/supervisors or persons in a similar position of responsibility work hours ranging from 15-20 or 25-30 hours each week. The vacation extended day care programs sometimes warrant 45 hours of work each week. People assisting in programs work a range of hours for an average of 15 hours per week with specialist instructors being involved for 2-4 hours each week.

Many of the supervisor/coordinators of the programs have qualifications relating to care or education. The range of qualifications includes Bachelor of Education, Child Care Associate Diploma or Certificate (2 years full time), Diploma of Teaching, Graduate Diploma in Education through to High School Junior Certificate.

Several programs call on Hourly Paid Instructors and sometimes parents for additional assistance. It is important to recognise that these assistants represent an additional commitment on the part of the regular staff to organise, supervise and guide the experiences they offer to children.

Salaries for supervisors/coordinators range up to \$20.25 per hour, with the mean being \$8.50. The hourly rates for assistants and the like are from \$4.00 to \$7.00 with a mean of \$6.50. There was no assessment of past experiences of staff members, but it was assumed that people's salaries were usually set in accordance with their education and experience. The responses revealed that if the highest qualification held by the supervisor of a particular program is a Junior Certificate, then the assistants for that program also possessed a Junior Certificate. Those staff with tertiary qualifications employed personnel with similar training and qualifications. This trend to hire people whose qualifications and experience were similar to the coordinator was commonly reported.

Interestingly enough, of the programs that have Coordinators, five of these people are also employed by the school. While this phenomenon has the obvious advantage of continuity, especially for children, a caution must be mentioned. The long and unusual hours, which are challenging in and of themselves, when coupled with additional job responsibilities take their toll over time. A high quality extended day program can ill afford to be plagued by avoidable problems such as fatigue or other such issues.

Most extended day programs have a 15:1 student:staff ratio. However, there are vast variations ranging from 3:1 to over 20:1 in four instances. These variations exist for many reasons and often depend on the time of day, whether it is an "after or before school" or a "vacation" program. They also vary according to the age of the children served in the program. However, a relatively low ratio of children to staff members is beneficial and necessary, for children are not always at their best early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

Program

Whether it is held within or outside of the school grounds, in its own rooms, or in shared accommodation with the school it seems the program is the heart of an extended day program. Fifteen percent of the schools reporting extended day programs described them as "informal with some planned activity" as opposed to "academic" or "formal, consisting of planned organised activity". Interestingly 46% also responded that the adjective "recreational" was suitable as a description of their program whilst 35% also added the description of "developmental". A total of 81% of programs responded to the combination of both recreational and developmental as characteristic of their programs. Although parents frequently express a preference for enrichment opportunities - music lessons, clubs and the like - most staff from the field respond that children need to play.

Respondents added many thoughtful comments about the nature of their programs that were similar in spirit. For example, some commented that programs are "catering for children's needs and wants", and children "participate by choice only". One program director stated that their offerings were "designed to encourage children to attend the Centre in preference to returning to unattended homes or roaming the streets". Two programs which have given careful thought to their rationale state:

"We attempt to provide a caring, stimulating program in as close as possible to an ideal at home situation as circumstances will allow".

"We endeavour to create a warm, close family environment for our children. We offer a variety of activities suited to their capabilities to help create feelings of self-worth and belonging".

Just about every program has outdoor play and a selection of indoor board games. Art and craft activities are also listed as favourites in 40 programs. Twenty nine programs provided space and sometimes help for homework. Thirty seven indicated that they offered "mini-courses", such as cooking. Of these, twenty-seven had specialists in to work with the children. Fifty percent of programs offer organised team sports, and 44% have television as an activity choice. Only three programs stated that television was not offered with one being most emphatic stating "Definitely not". Television also included the use of video films, an activity which was designated by some as being provided when the weather was not suitable for outdoor play and activity.

Forty percent of programs said that most of their activities are adult directed, whereas 11.5% reported that theirs are usually child directed. The remaining programs (49.5%) indicated a balance between a teacher and a child directed program.

Fifty three of the programs said they own their own equipment. Children in extended day programs appear to be quite hard on equipment. As apart from wages, 20 respondents indicated the next highest cost in their programs is repair and replacement of equipment. The purchase and replenishing of art and craft materials was also listed amongst major expenses in 25 programs. In situations where the program shares space within the school, sharing supplies of materials and equipment is hard on teachers. In many instances, duplication of equipment is costly and may well be unnecessary.

However, every program needs money to buy at least some equipment of its own. Amongst the more elaborate equipment that has been purchased are pottery and ceramic kilns, moulds, and glazes, a storage shed, sewing machines, record players, pool tables, gym equipment, some electronic games and 2 computers. At the other end of the spectrum several programs indicate that they have very little equipment, some having only sports equipment borrowed from other schools or only second-hand equipment. One program indicated that it supplements its own equipment with that of a local toy library.

A key part of an extended day program is something to eat. Surprisingly, 22 per cent of the programs have no snack during the session. A few programs ask parents to send snacks along with their children, but most provide them. Two centres have a facility where children can buy their snacks. More than half of the programs also ensure that their snacks are nutritionally sound. In twenty two programs, the children are involved in making the snacks on a regular basis, or have snacks provided by the Centre. Only one centre indicated that a snack is provided in their before school program and one stated that two snacks are provided each afternoon.

Each extended day program is unique and as such needs unique offerings. The curriculum of such programs is greatly influenced by the surroundings which should be attractive, warm and inviting. In addition to their own space or room within the school, programs benefit from having access to other areas such as sporting fields, tennis courts, gymnasium and other large hall-type spaces. Planning for programs should deal with the arrangements of equipment and use of space in order to foster and encourage children's independence. The time that the children spend in school is likely to be quite formal and may be regimented, so it is important that the hours outside school be less structured and pressure-free. Children need free-time. The young children especially need places where they can curl up quietly as well as places to run about and play. Older children also like their own space and equipment, away from desks. However, in any group situation there must be enough structure so that the wide age range of children is catered for, and individual rights are also protected.

It seems that many staff in extended day programs have given much thought to achieving an appropriate and careful balance between structured activity and free time for the children. Programs where staff members share special skills and interests with the children are attractive. The skills of the children themselves can also be shared with others to extend program opportunities. An even balance between the directed and recreational play activity must be sought. As one principal stated "It's always a problem striking a balance between structure and freedom at a time of the day when children are tired and don't really want to be organised." This is certainly a challenge for all staff involved in extended day programs.

According to several respondents and other commentators, social and emotional growth can be a significant aspect of an extended day program. Among comments from coordinators were that the strengths of the programs included: a "family atmosphere, caring and sharing learnt by children", "a caring attitude staff", "dynamic, relaxed", that children were given "an opportunity to experience organised activity that would otherwise not happen", an introduction to "a variety of projects and parents". One program related that it has a policy of "continuous deliberate reassessment" and another country school program states that children are able to make satisfactory produce and products that "boost local show entries".

Communication

It is essential for the staff of the school and the staff of the extended day program within school facilities to have a co-operative working relationship. For the child who is involved in a before school program, the onus is on the program staff member to relate any significant information from the child's parent or home to the classroom teacher. Continuous communication can also help facilitate information from a child's classroom teacher to those at home by way of the extended day program after school. It is helpful for teachers in schools and staff in the programs to view their respective responsibilities not independently but as a significant part of a connected set of experiences that a child has during any particular day.

A similar flow of communication between the extended day staff and home is equally important. Most parents are very interested and like to be informed not only of special occasions or events, but also of what is occurring in the program. Two thirds of the programs have a newsletter for parents. Other means of communication with parents are a handbook (14%), conference (6%) and special events (15%).

Twenty programs stated that they rely heavily on personal casual contact with parents rather than using other methods which include parent/staff interviews, general meetings, annual meetings, form reports, and letters or notices when necessary.

Many programs indicated that their main means of communication was irregular and very informal. In twenty programs communication was non-existent. One program indicated that parents were only contacted if there was some kind of problem. One would hope that the very nature of the extended day program would allow for regular and informal dialogue as children are picked up at the end of the day. However, a child is often hurriedly collected by a parent, or in the case of school children, they may well walk to their home from the program without staff making any kind of contact with a parent. A lack of parental communication or involvement can well be understood. Parents are busy and often tired at the end of a working day. Many older children are quite responsible for themselves and are as ready to accept independence as parents are prepared to grant it.

Unfortunately, in this way, some parents may never even see the extended day program let alone communicate with staff members. One may wonder what this lack of parental involvement or show of active interest says to children. Can children be proud of and want to attend a program in which their parents have no involvement? Staff appreciate and often need the encouragement from parents as well as contact with parents which can help foster a better understanding of children. In order to overcome some existing communication problems one program indicated that it plans to involve the children in writing and preparing their own newsletter each month.

In twenty three programs parents were involved in working with the children on a regular basis, whilst nineteen more indicated that parents were marginally involved. Several programs indicated that parents were involved in committee work and one program stated that there was social contact between staff and parents. At one school parents accept the responsibility for and run the extended day program for children who might normally go home to an empty house.

Budget

How do extended day programs manage financially?

Only seven programs indicated that they make a profit and can return surplus funds to benefit and improve the program. Another four make a profit and return the surplus to the school. In just on half of the programs, staff have indicated that they "break even" with regard to incoming fees, funds and subsidies, and outgoing costs. In only one program, the school provides a direct subsidy.

Those in charge of extended day programs must be clear that their first priority is to serve children and families, which, of course, influences programming. Since most schools indirectly subsidise their extended day programs by providing space, utilities and maintenance, it seems fair for programs to contribute to overhead expenses whenever possible. It is of concern that there is so much variation in the actual income generated by fees. There may well be the concern that in programs in which income is a high priority, the result may be competent but uninspired childminding.

Programs receive grants from various government departments and agencies, and eight indicate that they receive money from a combination of such organisations. Several receive funds from one particular source for before and after school programs and from another for vacation programs.

Several programs charge varying fees according to the type of activity in which the children take part. In fewer than four programs, staff report receiving money from donations. One reported income from a local church group.

Seventeen programs stated that they receive no income - with one stating that none is required as the service is free to children who attend. Fifteen offer no financial aid to parents, while the rest make full or partial aid available. The parents who are assisted in this way are most often single parents or unemployed. Only one school reports that extended day program fees are included in the usual school charges. This means that the program is funded from the school budget.

The major expenses in program budgets are salaries and supplies including art/craft materials followed by equipment and snacks. Other expenses include the cost of excursions for children, telephone and other associated administrative costs and stationery. One program lists that it incurs expenses by using a computer which it shares with the school. Cleaning and some maintenance is usually provided by the school. Only five programs have to pay for this type of maintenance. Financial records of the programs are in all cases, except one, kept apart from those of the school. Since most programs occupy school space, insurance is usually covered by the policy that relates to the overall school, but nineteen programs state that they carry a separate policy. Personal insurance for each individual child is optional and is arranged by parents.

Licensing

There seems to be little formalisation relating to the licensing of the extended day programs and it varies accordingly from state to state. It is difficult to find written policy applying to all functions and regulation of extended day programs.

In South Australia, the Physical Education Section of the Education Department subsidises vacation care programmes, whilst subsidies for before and after school programs are arranged through the Children's Services Office. Although the Children's Services Office has been in operation since August 1985, guidelines for licensing of extended day programs are not available and are not expected until September 1987. Many programs in Queensland apply for funds through the Children's Services Department and also rely on this same Department to evaluate their program. This particular form of evaluation is relatively informal and it seems that if a program can qualify for funds, then it can also obtain approval to operate.

Evaluation

Like any program in a school, an extended day program should be evaluated, and this evaluation should extend to beyond the mere ability to meet basic requirements to qualify for government subsidies. In only twenty one of the programs, staff indicated that the program had, in fact, been "evaluated" by one or more of the following agents: a government department or agency, the school principal (in two cases), the program's own coordinator, the school council, teacher/parents/children, and in one program, the whole school staff and a school based evaluator. Over half of the respondents indicated that there was no mechanism for formal evaluation of the program.

The staff is informally evaluated in two thirds of the programs, but only 9% in a written form. It seems that if the school's regular teachers are evaluated, more attention should be given to the evaluation of staff involved with children in any extended day program. This is certainly in keeping if an emphasis on quality is to be foremost in any setting. The purpose of staff evaluation should ensure the growth and development of individual staff members.

It is noteworthy that 83% of respondents believe that their program contributes to the overall quality of the school. When asked how much time they commit to the program, 24% of the principals of schools indicated that it took only a little of their time, just a half said that it took some time, and the remainder said that it required a lot of their time.

When coordinators/supervisors of programs were asked if a "quality job" is being done, just over two thirds said "yes". However, the others stated that the quality of such programs fluctuated with the quality of the instructors and that there was in one instance, "room for improvement". One coordinator stated that "a lot of effort goes into the program from all of the staff" to ensure that a quality program was provided for the children.

When asked about their weaknesses, the following areas were most frequently listed by coordinators: lack of funds, not enough staff, staff turnover and quality of staff, more parental involvement and support, lack of facilities, lack of new ideas, not enough storage space, and an inability to cater properly for 5-8 year olds. Other items mentioned in detail were the number of staff hours spent in preparation (a factor that is apparently not catered for in government grant money) and the fact that some parents reveal that 15 cents per hour, although seemingly minimal for an extended day program, was hard to find. This same program stated that "over 250 children use the program over a year out of a school population of 420 children." The response went on to say, "We are looking at ways to reduce costs so that the program better meets the needs of the community". One aspect also listed amongst such concerns was the need to have increased funding to employ full time staff which would avail stability and security for the children and the program. This same respondent stated "It would also enable us to extend our program to cater for children 12-16 years".

In citing the strengths of their programs, coordinators listed such factors as: providing quality staff with a caring attitude, being able to meet parental and local needs, providing a relaxed atmosphere, enhancing positive image of the school, and promoting a widely varied program. Further strengths mentioned were fostering happy children, ensuring a wide range of experiences and organised activities for children, opportunity for children to choose activities, and opportunity for good community liaison.

In response to the question about the quality of the school's extended day program the replies varied. The following are a sample of statements made by program coordinators:

- . "We believe that this program which has varied in organisation and scope from year to year, provides positive activities before school, during the lunch break and after school for many children whose main experience out of school is T.V. viewing",

- . "our aim is the protection and welfare of children",
- . "we believe that the interaction of parents, staff and some high school students has strengthened community ties and improved awareness of the school as a positive, caring organisation in a very deprived low socio-economic community"
- . "Our endeavour is to provide a family environment for the children. Great care is taken in providing a happy and secure atmosphere. Children seem happy and on many occasions castigate parents should they arrive early".

INFORMAL PROGRAMS

While no space was allocated for the reporting of informal programs for before and after school care, a total of 48 respondents indicated that there was some type of informal program offered in their school. It is interesting to note in Table 6 that the largest category of informal programs falls in the category of small schools with populations of less than 101.

TABLE 6

Informal Before and After School Programs Reported by School size

	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total Programs</u>
Under 101	18	37.5%
102 - 200	6	12.5%
201 - 350	12	25.0%
351 - 500	8	16.7%
Over 500	<u>4</u>	<u>8.3%</u>
	<u>48</u>	100.0%
% of Total Response	4.2%	

An additional 48 schools, or 4.2%, indicated that informal programs were in place. This total, when combined with the formal school program figure, yields a 9.6% participation rate.

Voluntary responses from forty eight schools indicated that an informal style of program operated in schools to cater for early arrival and late departure of children. The nature of such activity ranged from supervision in the playground to a full array of elective subjects. In some cases, school facilities were leased to local clubs, hence allowing children to be eligible to partake of offered classes and to use facilities. A frequently mentioned incident was the leasing of the school pool or sporting facilities for use by outside organisations. Some communities utilise the school library as a community library and, in these cases, children were welcome to partake of the resources and programs offered at the venue.

A few schools indicated that homework time and afternoon tea were made available to children who awaited late buses to take them home. In such cases, it appears that staff arranged informal duty rosters to cater for supervision requirements.

The report of one small state school in Queensland certainly indicated some creative thinking by the local school and community with regard to catering for the extended day in an informal, non-subsidised way. At the school a program offers children the opportunity to select from projects, games or gardening activities while waiting for the bus to arrive. According to the principal the program aims "to develop responsibility, cooperation and self discipline in addition to enjoyment and gaining interests in new areas".

This unique approach to catering for after school care highlights some of the very positive benefits that can be gained from the informal approach to caring for children. Maroya (1985) reports on the virtues of the small school. While Maroya (1985) concentrates largely on the classroom benefits, one can easily extrapolate to the benefits to the community at large. Maroya (1985) indicates that children, teacher and parents formed a "symbiotic", caring community. Children tend to develop independent learning skills and were able to partake in a wide variety of activities because of the involvement of parents and community members.

At another one teacher school in Queensland, a thirty minute activity period is conducted after school. Parents are rostered to present various activities for the children while everyone awaits dismissal of the high school students.

Some other schools reported that informal programs in foreign languages were available after school, during holidays and on weekends. Reye's (1983) article, "Ethnic Community Schools", describes two programs in Brisbane that have catered for such needs.

Computer clubs were mentioned by a few schools as a popular after school offering. The school, as a public venue with expensive facilities and equipment, becomes a very valuable resource for community use. In Queensland, a 1977 statement, Use of School Facilities, indicates the results of a small survey on the subject and provides guidance to principals and school staff regarding benefits and problems associated in the utilisation of facilities by outside groups. Clear and tangible benefits of such an approach are indicated in the document (1977:3-4):

- . funds raised
- . donations of books
- . outdoor equipment provided
- . children benefit from coaching and activities
- . better behavior from children
- . fewer break-ins and vandalism
- . improved public relations
- . improved parent liaison
- . community support for school is increased.

Very few problems were identified in the Queensland Department of Education (1977) survey, but those that were indicated bear further consideration. Supervision of activities was a primary concern. Principal's and staff time seemed stretched already and such duties placed a "further imposition" (1977:4). Cleaning of the school grounds and classrooms becomes problematic and revised schedules need to be put in place. While security is not identified as a problem, the concern is noted in the guidelines (1977:9).

PLAY GROUPS

The final question on the initial, one-page questionnaire asked whether a playgroup operated as a part of the school program during school hours. Respondents to this question often indicated that while a playgroup was not located in the school, such a program operated in the community and parents were referred to the local sponsoring group. Kindergartens and preschools in local communities were identified as being the major providers of facilities for play-group activities. Table 7 displays the number of responses for the availability of playgroups in schools or local communities.

TABLE 7

Do you have a Playgroup Program for Children During School Hours?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
South Australia	141	206
Queensland	96	552

Playgroups operating either in school or community. Referral and information available. Program known to school.

South Australia's response to the question shows a high degree of participation with 141 schools responding that they either ran a program or referred parents and children to the local playgroup. In correspondence with the Playgroup Association of South Australia, (PGASA), staff indicated that 694 playgroups were known to be operating in South Australia. Of that total, 249 operated from school buildings, 200 from kindergartens and the remaining 245 from church halls (225) or homes (20).

Queensland figures for the playgroup question reveal a very small number of schools involved in or referring parents to playgroup activities. According to the Queensland Playgroup Association, 15 affiliated playgroups operate in Catholic and State primary schools. This figure is 2.5% of the total number of affiliated groups operating in the state. From the survey results, it would appear that the largest portion of playgroups in Queensland schools are independent, non affiliated groups run by local interest networks.

NO PROGRAM

By far, the largest number of responses fell in the area of "no extended day program offered". Table 8 provides a detailed break-down of the responses by state and by reason given. The single reason of "never considered" is by far the most commonly noted reason, yielding 690 responses or 63%. This question yielded several unsolicited comments regarding the reasons for not offering programs.

TABLE 8

No Extended Day Program Offered

	Number		Total	%
	S.A.	Qld.		
Decided Against	41	28	69	6.3%
Considering	17	15	32	2.9%
Organising	1	2	3	.3%
Discontinued	30	10	40	3.6%
Never Considered	205	485	690	63.0%
Other	22	79	101	9.2%
No	<u>29</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>10.6%</u>
	345	706	1051	95.9%
Didn't answer question			45	4.1%
			1096	100.0%

Our study reveals several reasons for such a small participation rate in the extended day program. The following reasons were provided by the schools:

- . no need
- . buses take children home
- . other program available
- . size (too small)
- . no financial support
- . staff turnover and stress
- . space problems
- . apathy
- . not the task of teachers.

The response "no need" was indicated so often that we began to wonder what the criteria had been for rendering such a statement. Some schools reported that surveys had been conducted and had yielded "no need" (e.g. 2 children out of 157 required such a program). In another case, a principal noted that there had been no response to a newsletter question regarding need. Small mining towns and rural communities also indicated that parents were home to care for children. Schools in transitional suburbs and towns indicated that community needs were changing as populations shifted and as employment opportunities altered.

In many country areas and rural school settings, school buses provide the transportation of children. In many cases, schools reported that the buses were a form of after-school program. In any case, the school grounds were vacant after school. One principal remarked, "All our students travel home by school bus. Nobody is left at school and there is not a town at".

Size of school was mentioned as a reason for no program. Principals indicated thus:

- . "distance and size (7 children) prevent such activity"
- . "no call in this town of 500 people"
- . "principal drives all 11 children to and from school"

Lack of support to run programs was mentioned frequently as a reason for no provision. Schools indicated that "resources could not be stretched" to pay for such activities, that proposals for after school care had been rejected or programs closed. In addition to the financial constraints, a few schools mentioned that parental and community apathy precluded any such programs from succeeding. School staff stated that they did perceive a need for such programs but they also indicated that the stress of daily work with the children in the school context made them too tired to extend the day any further. Some responses in this area provide insight into the feelings of teachers:

- . "We are so worn out at the end of each day - we'd never have the energy."
- . "There are too many commitments by staff already."
- . "This is not high on our priority list."
- . "Frequent staff turnover prevents any such initiative from getting off the ground."
- . "We perceive a need for such a program. Staff cuts, staff turnover, no funds and other issues are a real hindrance. We will reconsider when money is available."

A very small number indicated that they clearly did not see the care of children after school as being the responsibility of the school, as indicated in these remarks:

- . "We request our parents to accept the care and responsibility of their children."
- . "I was formerly a director of such a program and believe it encouraged families to shed the caring role more and more. It was counter-productive."
- . "Teachers are already performing duties which belong to parents - it's about time parents got their priorities correct - bring baby into the world - care for baby - Teachers are not baby-child minders. School buildings are available to groups to run such programs but without teachers."

Several schools reported that local programs were already available for after school care and that children from their schools participated in those activities. In a few cases, teachers took part in programs at other venues. Family day care schemes were mentioned as providing for the after school care of some children.

EMERGENT QUESTIONS

*Who is providing after school care for school-age children whose parent/parents work?

From the responses to our survey, it can be seen that schools are providing some care in formal or informal programs. The response indicates that 9.6% of schools offer space for some formal and informal care/education/recreation activities. Other community groups are involved in catering for after school care. In Queensland, a Brisbane based group,

Queensland Children's Activities Network (QCAN) works to encourage the growth and development of school age child care programs and services. As advocates for school-age child care, QCAN members campaign for adequate funding, conduct research projects, speak out on school age child care issues, provide practical assistance to persons involved in school age child care.

In both states, it is clear that some after school care is provided by organised groups but the provision is scanty. The method of information collection for child care arrangements conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 1980 was not sufficiently detailed to reveal the care of school age children after school and during vacation periods. The ABS has been seeking advice on the information required by policy makers, program planners, academics and government departments. Future statistics on child care arrangements should be more specific and revealing regarding the options available to families in this context.

The overall picture of child care arrangements for school age children is unclear. To gain a realistic picture of the need a full scale investigation could be undertaken to identify accurate numbers of children requiring some service, needed hours of service and the vast range of program requirements. It is worth noting that some children and parents might elect to utilise such experiences for social and recreational purposes as well as for care.

South Australia's Child Watch Committee has prepared a directory of Out-of-School Hours Care programs available in the State as a part of a 1986 project. Such directories need to be available to parents, schools and other community groups making decisions on such matters. Directories also require regular updating to keep abreast of new developments and program discontinuation.

*What is the role of the school in providing after school care?

This question requires a good deal of further investigation. Our results indicate that there is a perception of an educational mandate by the

schools with regard to its purpose. In both South Australia and Queensland, however, recent education enquiries and forward planning documents indicate that increased home-school interaction is a priority of the educational authorities. The nature of increased cooperation between home and school may take many forms and the provision of extended day and playgroup activities is but one of these.

It is difficult to accurately describe the role of the school in catering for such community needs. There are broad and diverse differences in community needs based on the particular characteristics of each population centre. Some advocates of after school programs would argue that the school is a logical venue for such programs because of its central location in the neighbourhood and its useful facilities.

*Is the actual school the best place for after-school, vacation and playgroup programs?

Children spend a considerable amount of time already engaged in activity in the school and there is some concern about the suitability of the venue for further time. The survey results indicate that the school is a convenient place but several respondents stressed that the extended day program needed its own identity, materials and space.

When a group is deciding on the venue for extended day programs, schools probably feature as the logical choice. Consideration should be given to providing the program with space and resources which can be called their own and care should be taken to create a warm, cosy and relaxing environment that differs from the classroom. Program developers who choose schools as a venue could consider some of the practical advice discussed in the section of this report entitled Program, p. 16-19.

*Do staff in extended day programs require training or qualifications?

Respondents to this survey have stressed that the staff play a very important role in ensuring a quality program for children. Since a first-rate staff is essential for a high quality extended day program, staffing should receive a great deal of attention and time all the way from initial screening of applicants to evaluation of staff members.

Recruitment of staff for extended day programs should follow the conventional process of advertising, interviewing, calling people given as referees, and so on. One of the most reliable sources for suitable personnel are the various Colleges of Advanced Education and TAFE colleges.

Possible other sources are newspaper advertisements, child care newsheets, and word of mouth. The extra time needed to conduct a thoughtful and thorough search for suitable staff is well worth the effort in the long run.

If a program is offered both before and after school hours it is recommended that the staff be the same at both times to give the children continuity and less change. This is especially important for the younger children.

Once program staff are in place, frequent opportunities to gain in-service education will enhance the enthusiasm of the staff team.

At the present time, there is a wide variation in qualifications of staff in such programs. It seems that this has occurred to suit local needs and because of a lack of specialist qualifications for this area of work. While a warm, caring attitude is important to the success of programs, it is also essential that staff are capable of planning diverse activities to suit various needs, interests and ages. Staff also require knowledge of first aid and parent communication. Some staff members will also require skills in budgeting, submission writing, program evaluation and public relations.

People who have undertaken studies in child care, early childhood, teaching and recreation/leisure studies or social work and nursing would have some skills required to launch a successful program. When staff are drawn from such a wide range of backgrounds it is important to conduct staff meetings and seminars which will assist in developing a program that respects the expertise of each person while promoting a team approach to the children.

***Do these programs require evaluation?**

At present, the arrangements for formal evaluation of extended day programs are virtually non-existent. Some programs have been operating for 18 years without a thorough assessment.

Because of this gap, there are currently no evaluation criteria that are tried and validated as reliable. Program supervisors, for the most part, believe that a quality job is being done. If evaluations were conducted in a formal sense we may be able to get a clearer picture of what quality looks like in such programs.

Any program which operates to serve the public profits from regular evaluation. Scope for such evaluation includes:

Children:

- . developmental records
- . areas of special prowess and interest

Staff:

- . progress
- . compatability with program goals

Program:

- . budget
- . offerings/curriculum
- . community relations
- . management
- . parent relations
- . goals and philosophy.

Conclusions

Formal Programs

In amassing the information contained in this report we have discovered that although less than 10% of schools are offering extended day programs, those existing programs offer a good deal of wisdom regarding day-to-day functioning and philosophical questions. In sharing their data with us, programs have revealed their unique differences and their striking similarities. Programs are distinctive in terms of the combinations of people participating and the size of the programs. Each community draws from a diverse population and caters for those clients with an equally distinctive staffing pattern.

In spite of this diversity in population, programs were most similar with regard to the choices offered to children. In establishing a program, it seems that most planners have respected parental wishes for a safe, supervised, convenient place for their children while catering for children's desire for fun. Children also require a chance to unwind, a place where there is freedom to choose friends and activities and opportunities for the types of experiences that might occur if they were at home. In short, children need friends, supportive adults, a snack and a place to relax. Program planners have been generous in provision of such experiences.

While we were encouraged by the kinds of formal programs we read about, we were concerned that several problems exist in the staffing area. Many programs do not use contracts or letters of agreement with staff members. Such a practice would assist in making expectations and responsibilities clear to both parties. Many programs indicated that they had experienced difficulty in attracting or retaining quality staff. Due to the split-shift nature of such work and the odd hours, this may continue to be a problem.

A further staffing problem has to do with the staff/child ratio. Widely variant practices are current and it would be beneficial for programs to work toward a low ratio as children require additional attention at these times of the day.

The personnel in extended day programs are rarely evaluated and when such assessments are conducted, they are usually informal. Regular, developmental evaluations of staff and the program could assist in building personal confidence and working competence. Any program that undertakes to conduct such evaluation will be in the forefront of this field as only 5 programs are currently undertaking formal, written assessment. Some guidelines on evaluation considerations can be found in Nall and Switzer (1984 : 52-55).

If programs begin to offer letters of agreement, improved working conditions and regular feedback to personnel, it is likely that staff will be better able to improve the quality of the extended day program.

Informal Programs

The informal programs differ in several ways from the formal programs. Because school staff are responsible for the safety and well-being of their students during the official school hours and until transportation has arrived, some schools have designed arrangements whereby children can become involved in recreation, leisure and educational activities. Such offerings are available for a limited time at no cost to families. These extra curricular activities are monitored and supervised by staff and, in some cases, by parents. These programs appear to be minor extensions of the school day and, as such, do not require the same detailed planning and evaluation for program coherence and staff development, as they are offered as in-house options for a discrete portion of the day, e.g. one half hour after school.

We were interested to note that 48 schools volunteered information about experiences for children during this transition period. Other schools who require brief after school activities may want to consider the benefits of offering a limited array of supervised options for children. Some sound suggestions appear in the report on pages 26-28.

Playgroups

The report reveals an extremely limited involvement of playgroup activities in school settings. The presence of very young children and parents in the school for brief periods during the day can be beneficial to the community. As more families become involved in the school at an early stage in their children's lives, a partnership and involvement between teachers and families grows. School staff can provide advice, support and space to parents of very young children who want to provide socialisation and experiences.

The vast majority of schools in Queensland and South Australia are currently not offering programs for before and after school care/recreation, vacation care/recreation or playgroup activities. Many respondents indicated that they were interested to see the results of the survey. We hope that the collected wisdom of 63 formal programs and 48 informal programs will inspire new initiatives in more school communities.

APPENDIX A
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Ref:

2 February 1986

Dear Principal/Teacher/Director,

We are currently undertaking a survey of the provision of after-school care/education/recreation and playgroup programs that operate as part of the school setting. In order to solicit a wide response to this question we are asking your support in the answering the enclosed questionnaire.

This survey is being undertaken to gain a clear understanding of the extent to which schools are providing programs for children and families in two different, but related, care contexts: the infant-toddler-parent playgroup and the after school "latch-key" program. The survey is being undertaken in all state, Catholic and independent primary schools in Queensland and South Australia and the results will be made public at the second National First Years of School Conference in Sydney in May, 1986.

The research is being undertaken by Barbara Piscitelli and Jenny Mobbs. As experienced lecturers in early childhood studies both of us have extensive experience in all facets of work relating to the care and education of children in child care, preschool/kindergarten, and primary school.

We would ask your cooperation in completing the enclosed questionnaire by 10 March, 1986. Should you have any questions regarding the project, please phone Barbara Piscitelli (07)352-8567 or Jenny Mobbs (08)297-9128 (A.H.).

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Piscitelli
Barbara Piscitelli.

J. Mobbs.
Jenny Mobbs.

EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY QUESTIONNAIRE

SCHOOL:

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS:

1. Enrolment of school (please circle appropriate number).

1. Under 101
2. 102 - 200
3. 201 - 350
4. 351 - 500
5. Over 500

2. Type of school (please circle).

1. Boys'
2. Girls'
3. Coeducational

3. Grades served (circle all that apply).

1. Preschool
2. 1 - 2
3. 3 - 7
4. 8 - 12

4. Do you have a program that cares for children before and/or after school hours?

_____ Yes. If "yes", after providing the information requested above and in the remainder of this section, please forward this packet to the individual in your school who is responsible for the program. Completed questionnaires should be returned to B. Piscitelli or J. Mobbs by March 4th 1986. An envelope is provided in this packet for your convenience.

A. Qualitatively (please circle appropriate number)

1. In my opinion the program adds to the overall quality of the school.
2. In my opinion the program detracts from the overall quality of the school.
3. In my opinion the program has no effect on the overall quality of the school.

B. Time commitment (please circle appropriate number)

1. The program takes none of my time.
2. The program takes some of my time.
3. The program takes a considerable amount of my time.

____ No. If "no", please circle the numbers that apply, making sure that the information above is complete, and return this page to B. Piscitelli or J. Mobbs by March 4th 1986 in the envelope provided.

1. We have considered organising such a program but have decided against it.
 2. We are currently considering it.
 3. We are currently organising it.
 4. We had a program and discontinued it.
 5. We have never considered it.
 6. Other _____
5. Do you have a playgroup program for children during school hours?
(Please circle.)
1. Yes
 2. No

Signature

* * * * *

Please return this questionnaire and the enclosed forms (if applicable) to: Ms. Barbara Piscitelli,
School of Early Childhood Studies,
Brisbane College of Advanced Education,
130 Victoria Park Road,
KELVIN GROVE, Q. 4059.

To be completed by the individual responsible for the
extended day program in the school

1. Number of years program has existed (include present year).
 1. In first year
 2. 2 - 4
 3. 4 - 6
 4. 6 - 10
 5. More than 10
2. Program was begun by
 1. Parents
 2. School
 3. Combination
 4. Other _____
 5. Unknown
3. Total enrolment in program
 1. Under 15
 2. 15 - 25
 3. 26 - 35
 4. 36 - 50
 5. 51 - 75
 6. 76 - 100
 7. Over 100
4. Ages served (may circle more than one).
 1. 3- to 5-year-olds
 2. 6- to 8-year-olds
 3. 9- to 12-year-olds
5. Is the program open to children from the outside community
 1. Yes
 2. No
 3. If yes, approximately what percentage of the children enrolled in the extended day program are from the outside community and are not students in the school? _____%
6. Approximate percentage of children enrolled in the extended day program from
 1. Single-parent family _____
 2. Two-parent family, one income _____
 3. Dual-earner family _____
 4. Other _____

7. Hours of program (may circle more than one; please give hours)
1. Before school _____
 2. After school _____
 3. Other _____
(i.e., one-day holidays, school vacations, summer, etc.)
8. Space for the program
1. Program has own room(s) within school building rent-free.
 2. Program has own room(s) within school building and pays rent.
 3. Program shares space with some part of school building rent-free.
 4. Program shares space with some part of school building and pays rent.
 5. Program run by school in facilities outside school grounds.
9. Payment of fees information
1. Weekly _____
 2. Monthly _____
 3. Bimonthly _____
 4. Other _____
- Please indicate fees.
10. Is fee included in usual school charges?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Optional
11. Enrolment information (may circle more than one) for roll keeping purposes.
1. Drop-in
 2. Hourly
 3. Part-time
 4. Full-time
 5. Other _____
12. Records maintained by program
1. Enrolment form or application
 2. Health
 3. Progress
 4. Other _____
13. Is there a penalty for late pick up of children?
1. Yes. If so, what? _____
 2. No

14. Is there any transportation provided by the program?

1. Yes. Please explain _____
2. No

15. Licensing

1. The program is licensed by the state.
2. The program is not licensed by the state.
3. Program is in the process of obtaining a license.

PERSONNEL

16. List positions within the staff of the program:

1. Title _____
Hours/week _____
Monthly salary _____
Also employed by school (yes/no) _____
Educational background _____
2. Title _____
Hours/week _____
Monthly salary _____
Also employed by school (yes/no) _____
Educational background _____
3. Title _____
Hours/week _____
Monthly salary _____
Also employed by school (yes/no) _____
Educational background _____
4. Title _____
Hours/week _____
Monthly salary _____
Also employed by school (yes/no) _____
Educational background _____

17. Approximate teacher-student ratio _____

18. Recruitment

1. It has been difficult to attract quality staff to this program.
2. We have not experienced difficulty in attracting quality staff.
3. Attracting quality staff has been somewhat of a problem.

19. Staff turnover

1. A great deal of staff turnover.
2. Some turnover in staff, but no more than what could be expected.
3. Very little turnover.

GOVERNANCE

20. Program is governed by

1. School council or committee
2. Its own board of management
3. Other _____

21. Does the program have by-laws?

1. Yes
2. No

22. Insurance agreements

1. Part of school policy
2. Separate from school policy
3. Combination of the above
4. Other _____

23. Are there special written agreements or any legal agreements concerning space, teacher contracts, etc.?

1. Yes. Specify _____
2. No

PROGRAM

24. How would you characterise the philosophy of the program? (Check all that apply.)

1. Academic
2. Recreational
3. Developmental
4. Informal with some planned activities
5. Formal, consisting of planned and organised activities
6. Comment _____

25. Provision of snacks

1. Parents provide snacks
2. Children make the snacks
3. Centre provides snacks
4. No snacks served
5. Children can buy snacks at the centre

26. Time of snacks

1. Before school only
2. After school only
3. Both before and after school
4. Occasionally

27. Are the snacks nutritionally sound?

1. Yes, consistently
2. Not particularly
3. Occasionally

28. Does the program have its own equipment?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, describe. _____

29. What kinds of activities are available for the children? (Check all that apply.)

1. Board games
2. Outdoor play
3. Mini-courses, i.e., cooking, yoga, etc.
4. Homework
5. Specialists to work with children, i.e., gymnast, potter, etc.
6. Television
7. Team sports
8. Art activities
9. Other _____

30. Structure of program

1. Most activities are adult directed
2. Most activities are child directed
3. A balance exists between adult- and child-directed activities

BUDGET

31. List major expenses _____

32. List income other than fees _____

33. Do you pay for maintenance including cleaning?

1. Yes
2. No

34. Provision of financial assistance

1. Some full fee relief
2. Some partial fee relief
3. Sliding scale fee relief for more than one child in family
4. Other _____

35. Overall financial state

1. Breaks even
2. Program returns funds to school
3. Program is subsidised by school
4. Program makes a profit and keeps it for program
5. Additional financial information: _____

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

36. Are parents involved in the program?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Marginally

37. Is reporting to parents

1. On a regular basis?
2. On a request basis?
3. Both?
4. No reporting to parents

38. Communication to and with parents is through

1. Newsletter
2. Handbook
3. Conferences
4. Special events
5. Other _____

EVALUATION

39. Children

1. Children are formally evaluated in written form
2. Children are informally evaluated
3. No attempt is made to evaluate the children

40. Staff

1. Staff are formally evaluated in written form
2. Staff are informally evaluated
3. No attempt is made to evaluate the staff

41. Program

1. The program has been formally evaluated. If so, by whom? _____
2. The program has not been formally evaluated.

42. Do you believe that a quality job is being done in the extended day program? _____

43. Strengths of program _____

44. Weaknesses of program _____

Comments:

Questionnaire completed by

Name:

Title:

Home address:

Home telephone:

Please return this questionnaire to: Ms. Barbara Piscitelli,
School of Early Childhood Studies,
Brisbane College of Advanced Education,
130 Victoria Park Road,
KELVIN GROVE, Q. 4059.